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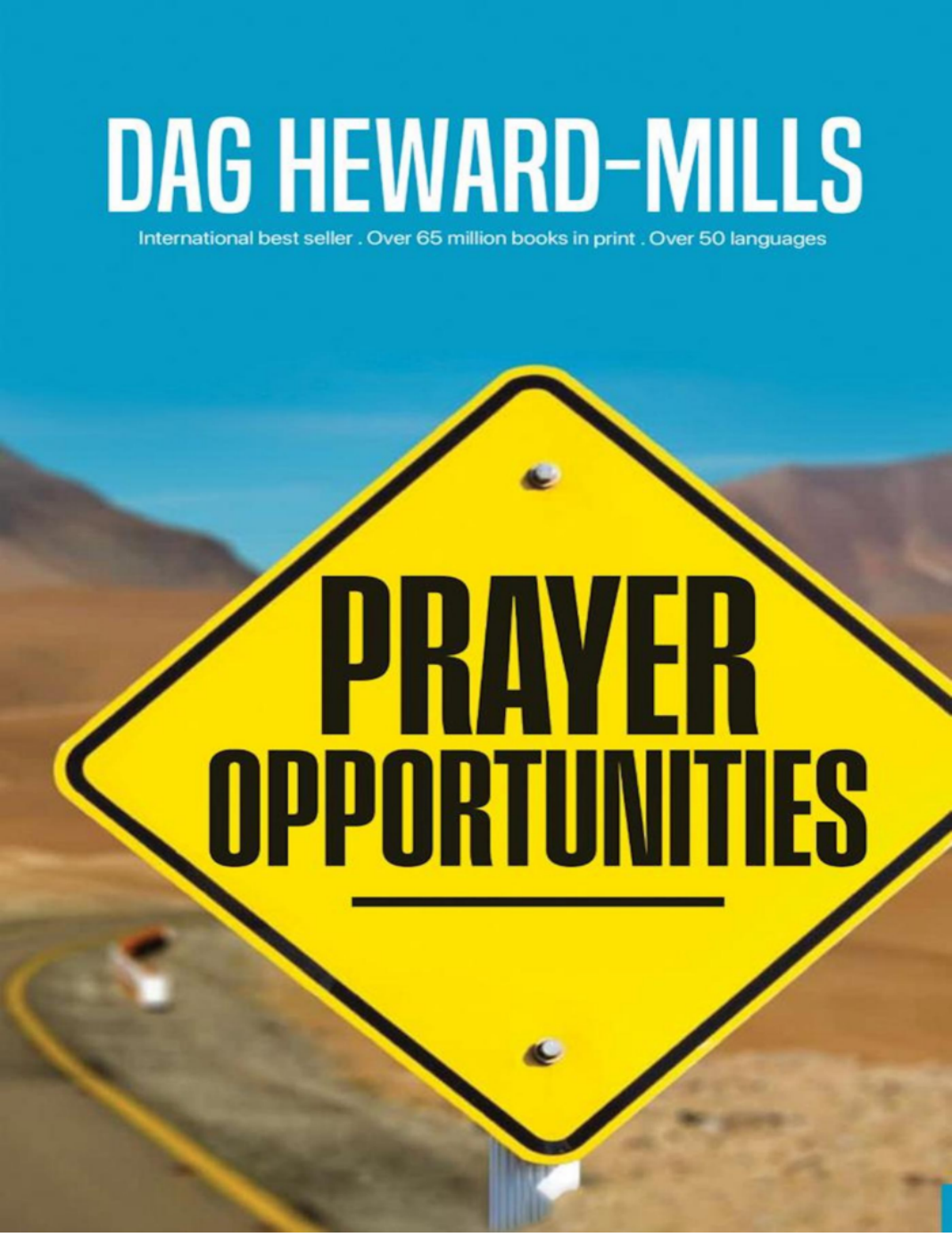

Prayer Opportunities

Dag Heward-Mills

Parchment House

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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Chapter 1
Prayer is an Opportunity to Show an Interest in God

And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: THEN BEGAN MEN TO CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Genesis 4:26

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do!

Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual.

Prayer is calling upon God!

In the beginning, men did not call on God.

Many men lived and died without acknowledging God. Several men are mentioned in the genealogies in the Bible, and their achievements are noted. None of them called on God, and none of them prayed. However, in the days when Seth had a son named Enos, men began to pray.

And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructer of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah.

And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

AND TO SETH, TO HIM ALSO THERE WAS BORN A SON; AND HE CALLED HIS NAME ENOS: THEN BEGAN MEN TO CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Genesis 4:17-26

In the days of Enoch, Cain built a city and named it after his son, Enoch. Cain did not pray and his son, Enoch did not call on God either.

In the days of Lamech, polygamy was introduced to the world. Lamech had two wives. Lamech had a child called Jabal with his first wife Adah. In the days of Jabal, living in tents became fashionable and cattle rearing was established.

Lamech had another child with his first wife, Adah, and gave birth to Jubal. Jubal and Jabal were children of Adah. In the days of Jubal, musical instruments were introduced into the world. Harps and organs were invented.

Lamech had a second wife called, Zillah. Zillah gave birth to a boy and a girl. The boy was called Tubalcain and the girl was called Naamah. In the days of Tubalcain, metalworks and tools made out of bronze and iron were introduced into the world.

Lamech also introduced more murder into the world. He said he had done ten times more evil than his ancestor Cain.

And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

Genesis 4:23-24

Lamech said he had killed a man and also killed a young man. According to some ancient books, Lamech killed Cain by accident and also killed his own son.

And Lamech was old and advanced in years, and his eyes were dim that he could not see, and Tubal Cain, his son, was leading him and it was one day that Lamech went into the field and Tubal Cain his son was with him, and while they were walking in the field, Cain the son of Adam advanced towards them; for Lamech was very old and could not see much, and Tubal Cain his son was very young. And Tubal Cain told his father to draw his bow, and with the arrows he struck Cain, who was

yet far off, and he killed him, because he appeared be an animal to them. And the arrows entered Cain's body although he was at a distance from them, and he fell to the ground and died. And the Lord rewarded Cain's evil according to his wickedness, which he had done to his brother Abel, according to the word of the Lord which he had spoken.

And it came to pass when Cain had died, that Lamech and Tubal went to see the animal which they had slain, and they saw, and behold Cain their grandfather was fallen dead on the earth. And Lamech was very much grieved at having done this, and in clapping his hands together (in grief) he struck his son and caused his death.

And the wives of Lamech heard what Lamech had done, and they sought to kill him. And the wives of Lamech hated him from that day, because he killed Cain and Tubal Cain, and the wives of Lamech separated from him, and would not listen to him in those days. And Lamech came to his wives, and he begged them to listen to him about this matter.

And he said to his wives Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice O wives of Lamech, attend to my words, for now you have imagined and said that I killed a man with my wounds, and a child with my stripes for they did no violence, but certainly know that I am old and grey-headed, and that my eyes are heavy through age, and I did this thing unknowingly. And the wives of Lamech listened to him in this matter, and they returned to him with the advice of their father Adam, but they bore no children to him from that time, knowing that God's anger was increasing in those days against the sons of men, to destroy them with the waters of the flood for their evil acts. *(Book of Jasher Chapter 2:26-36)*

The introduction of prayer into the world was notable. Many people do not pray and do not call on God. Yet, prayer is so important that we are taught never to stop praying and never to stop calling on God. Of all the things that were introduced by Adam's lineage, the most significant was the miracle-working prayer, which was introduced in the days of Enos.

When prayers were introduced into the world, it was a sign that men were developing an interest in the things of God.

Chapter 2
Prayer is an Opportunity to Call on God

Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and CALLED UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Genesis 12:8 (NASB95)

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual.

Seth was the third son of Adam. Seth gave birth to Enos. In the days when Seth gave birth to Enos, people began to call on God. That was when prayer began in this world. None of the descendants of Cain introduced prayer into the world.

As the years went by, other people decided to call on God and involve God in their lives. "Calling on God" was the term used for prayer in the ancient world. Many things were learnt and experienced by those who took the opportunity and learnt to call on God and to include God in their lives.

1. Abraham took the opportunity to call on God.

Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and CALLED UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Genesis 12:8 (NASB95)

2. Isaac took the opportunity to call on God.

So he built an altar there and CALLED UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Genesis 26:25 (NASB95)

3. David took the opportunity to call on God.

Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord

into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. Give thanks unto the Lord, CALL UPON HIS NAME, MAKE KNOWN HIS DEEDS AMONG THE PEOPLE. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

1 Chronicles 16:7-9

4. Samuel took the opportunity to call on the Lord.

Moses and Aaron were among His priests, AND SAMUEL WAS AMONG THOSE WHO CALLED ON HIS NAME; They called upon the Lord and He answered them.

Psalm 99:6 (NASB95)

"Is it not the wheat harvest today? I WILL CALL TO THE LORD, THAT HE MAY SEND THUNDER AND RAIN. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great which you have done in the sight of the Lord by asking for yourselves a king." So Samuel called to the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

1 Samuel 12:17-18 (NASB95)

5. Naaman expected Elisha to take the opportunity to call on God.

But Naaman was furious and went away and said, "Behold, I thought, 'He will surely come out to me and stand and CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD HIS GOD, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.'"

2 Kings 5:11 (NASB95)

6. Jonah took the opportunity to call on God in the belly of the whale.

And he said, "I CALLED OUT OF MY DISTRESS TO THE LORD, AND HE ANSWERED ME. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice.

Jonah 2:2 (NASB95)

7. The psalmist called on God.

OH GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, CALL UPON HIS NAME; Make known His deeds among the peoples.

Psalm 105:1 (NASB95)

8. Forgiveness happens to those who take the opportunity to call on God.

For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, AND ABUNDANT

IN LOVINGKINDNESS TO ALL WHO CALL UPON YOU.

Psalm 86:5 (NASB95)

9. God has inclined His ears to those who call on Him.

Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I SHALL CALL UPON HIM as long as I live.

Psalm 116:2 (NASB95)

10. Those who flee from lusts and pursue righteousness join up with those who call on God.

Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with THOSE WHO CALL ON THE LORD from a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22 (NASB95)

11. Wicked people do not call on the Lord. Prayerlessness is characteristic of wicked people.

Do all the workers of wickedness not know, Who eat up my people as they eat bread, And DO NOT CALL UPON THE LORD?

Psalm 14:4 (NASB95)

12. Those who do not call on God can expect the wrath of God.

Pour out Your wrath upon the nations which do not know You, And upon the kingdoms which DO NOT CALL UPON YOUR NAME.

Psalm 79:6 (NASB95)

13. Calling on God will save you in the day of trouble.

CALL UPON ME in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.

Psalm 50:15 (NASB95)

I CALLED ON YOUR NAME, O LORD, Out of the lowest pit.

Lamentations 3:55 (NASB95)

I CALL UPON THE LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies.

2 Samuel 22:4 (NASB95)

14. Calling on God will relieve you from distresses.

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! YOU HAVE RELIEVED ME IN MY DISTRESS; Be gracious to me and hear my

prayer.

Psalm 4:1(NASB95)

15. Call on God because He will answer.

I HAVE CALLED UPON YOU, FOR YOU WILL ANSWER ME, O God; Incline Your ear to me, hear my speech.

Psalm 17:6 (NASB95)

AS FOR ME, I SHALL CALL UPON GOD, And the Lord will save me.

Psalm 55:16 (NASB95)

HE WILL CALL UPON ME, AND I WILL ANSWER HIM; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honour him.

Psalm 91:15 (NASB95)

16. God will hear you calling on Him when you stop accusing others.

Then YOU WILL CALL, AND THE LORD WILL ANSWER; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' IF YOU REMOVE THE YOKE FROM YOUR MIDST, THE POINTING OF THE FINGER AND SPEAKING WICKEDNESS,

Isaiah 58:9 (NASB95)

17. God can answer you whilst you are still praying.

It will also come to pass that BEFORE THEY CALL, I WILL ANSWER; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

Isaiah 65:24 (NASB95)

18. You will see great and mighty things when you call to God.

CALL TO ME AND I WILL ANSWER YOU, AND I WILL TELL YOU GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS, which you do not know.

Jeremiah 33:3 (NASB95)

19. Salvation and deliverance come to those who call on God.

And it shall be that EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.

Acts 2:21 (NASB95)

And it will come about that WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE DELIVERED; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.

Joel 2:32 (NASB95)

20. Calling on God is for everyone.

> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?
>
> Romans 10:12-14

Chapter 3
Prayer is an Opportunity to Turn Things Around

FOR I KNOW THAT THIS SHALL TURN to my salvation THROUGH YOUR PRAYER, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ

Philippians 1:19

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to turn things around. Many things will turn around because you prayed.

Perhaps you are looking for situations to turn around. The way things are made to turn around is through prayer. Your captivity can be turned around as you learn to pray. Those who end up singing the song in this scripture are those who have learnt to turn things around through prayer.

When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

Psalm 126:1-3

After singing about how the Lord had turned their captivity, the psalmist prayed that the Lord should do it again. Then he declared that those who sow in tears would reap in joy. He was explaining how the joy of the turning of the captivity came about. That joy comes to those who sow in tears. Prayer is sowing seeds in tears. The turning of captivities is the reaping of joy from what has been sown in tears.

Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:4-6

Chapter 4
Prayer is an Opportunity to Connect with God

THEY HAVE LOST CONNECTION WITH THE HEAD, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Colossians 2:19 (NIV)

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to connect with God!

A prayerless person is a disconnected person because he has very little connection with the Father.

Prayer is an opportunity to connect with the Father and to fellowship with God's presence. Through prayer, you connect and become close to God. Without this connection, you cannot be a normal Christian and you cannot bear fruit.

Prayer is talking to someone. When you talk to someone, you are close to that person. Anytime you talk to someone, you are in the presence of the person you are talking to.

In the book of John, Jesus explains how we need to abide in Him and be close to Him. We are not only expected to abide with Him but also to abide in Him. It is through abiding in Him that we will be fruitful.

Many people are not fruitful because they have lost connection with the head. They have lost the ability to stay close. They are disconnected. They have detached from the branch. When I look at some of my pastors, I can simply see disconnected and detached ministers who have become fruitless.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Prayer is your great opportunity to reconnect and establish a connection with God. Prayer is a great opportunity to establish the great connection you need to bear fruit. A prayerless person is a disconnected person because he has very little connection with the Father. A prayerless person is someone who has very little interaction with God.

Prayer connects you to God. Jesus said some people will come to Him saying, "I did great works for You", but He will say He does not know them. How is it possible to do great works for Him without His knowing you?

It is possible because you can do great works without praying. There are many prayerless people who do great works. Even unbelievers do great works without praying. But through prayer, you become connected to God. Then you will have a personal connection with God. Prayer will make you know the God you talk to.

> Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And THEN WILL I PROFESS UNTO THEM, I NEVER KNEW YOU: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
>
> Matthew 7:21-23

Chapter 5
Prayer is an Opportunity to Exercise Your Faith

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. NEVERTHELESS WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMETH, SHALL HE FIND FAITH ON THE EARTH?

Luke 18:1-8

I am sure you want an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to exercise your faith!

Jesus established the truth that prayer is an act of faith. This is why He asked directly after teaching on prayer if the Son of man would find men of faith on the earth.

It is important to understand that prayer is your opportunity to exercise faith. Prayer is an opportunity to walk by faith. Prayer is a faith opportunity. Prayer is walking by faith and living by faith.

Every time you pray, you are exercising faith. Every time you pray, you are speaking to someone you cannot see, and that is an act of faith. Faith is the evidence of things you cannot see. Therefore, anytime you are dealing with things you cannot see, you are exercising faith. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for. Any time you speak to God, you are speaking about things you hope for. Any time you speak to God, you are hoping that all that you pray for will come to pass.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB)

When you sit up all night, speaking into the air to someone you cannot feel, someone you cannot touch, someone who does not say a word back to you, you need great faith to continue speaking.

I once counselled a young lady who gave short, curt answers to every question I asked. She was not interested in having a conversation with me. Her brief, single-word sentences discouraged me greatly, and I lost hope in relating to her. I did not believe that anything I said would save her or change her. I quickly disconnected from her and stopped calling or attempting to counsel her.

Why did I lose hope? Why did I lose faith? I lost faith because there was very little response from this lady. When you pray, there is indeed very little response from the Lord. It seems as though He does not hear. It seems as though He is not there. It seems as though the Bible is just a fairy tale.

Indeed, it takes great faith to carry on in prayer. Where are the answers to all the prayers we have ever prayed? Where are the answers to all the cries that have come from our hearts? It seems as though God does not hear, and yet, we must continue praying and believing that God will avenge us and contend against those who contend against us. Anyone who persists in prayer is a man of faith!

I see many pastors who do not pray much. If a man of God does not pray, it means he is not a man of faith. If a man of God does not pray, he is not a man who walks and lives by faith in Almighty God. If your pastor does not pray much, it means your pastor is not a man of God and he is not a man of faith.

Chapter 6
Prayer is an Opportunity to Please God Intensely

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to please God intensely! Prayer is a "pleasing God opportunity" because prayer is a major act of faith. Because prayer is an act of faith, it is an act of pleasing Him intensely.

Not everything pleases God; but one thing that pleases God greatly is your prayer. God must be so impressed when He sees you walking about in a room speaking into the air when you can see no one and hear no one.

What a great act of faith it is when you have spoken in the air for six hours and have not heard a single audible word in response to the multitude of words you have spoken to God. As each minute goes by, God must be intensely impressed and excited. As each day goes by, and you continue to wait on Him, surely God will be highly impressed that you are still there.

After three days of prayer, God must be impressed that you have not given up and that you are still hopeful that the words you are speaking are being heard in heaven. Indeed, prayer is your great opportunity to please God intensely.

When you walk around in a garden praying from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, spending seven hours in prayer and looking like a raving lunatic or appearing to people like an ape walking through a forest, you have moved in great faith and it must please God intensely.

Chapter 7
Prayer is an Opportunity to Fight back

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Luke 22:31-32

I am sure you want an opportunity to do something spiritual! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to fight back the spiritual offensive!

There are attacks by the enemy that you cannot prevent. Jesus could not prevent satan from attacking Simon Peter. It was something that had to happen. Jesus informed Simon that he was the target of a big satanic strike. Peter had no way of escaping the demonic onslaught that was to come to him. He had no way of preventing it from happening. In the realm of the spirit, it was determined.

What could Peter do to overcome it or to fight back? There was only one thing that would save Peter's life and ministry, and that was prayer!

Jesus explained, "I have prayed for you." Because of the prayer, satan's strike at the heart of Peter's ministry would not succeed.

1. Prayer is your opportunity to do something about the evil that has come your way.

2. Prayer is your opportunity to do something about temptations that have come your way.

3. Prayer is your opportunity to do something about the persecutions that have come your way.

4. Prayer is your opportunity to do something about the distress that has come your way.

5. Prayer is your opportunity to do something about the wickedness that has come your way.

6. Prayer is an opportunity to fight back after a satanic strike.

7. Prayer is a counter-offensive move.

8. Prayer is an opportunity to defend yourself.

9. Prayer is an opportunity to strike back.

10. Prayer is an opportunity to prevent total collapse after a bad attack from the enemy has come your way.

Jesus said, “But I have prayed for you.” When you are attacked by the enemy, you must respond in the same way Jesus did. You must rise up in prayer and respond. The prayers that you send up are the only appropriate responses that you have to fight back against a bad attack on your life.

Chapter 8
Prayer is an Opportunity to Minister to God

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. AS THEY MINISTERED TO THE LORD, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away

Acts 13:1-3

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to minister to God.

The scripture above shows that the prophets and teachers just "ministered to the Lord".

For many people, prayer is simply the presentation of a shopping list: "O God, these are the things I need from you, O God, please give me the following items." The kind of prayer that was being made by these prophets and teachers was not the presentation of a shopping list; they were ministering to the Lord.

1. To minister to someone is to do things for the person.

2. To minister to someone is to love the person.

3. To minister to someone is to give attention to the person.

4. To minister to someone is to have time to attend to the person. When you minister to a person, you often end up fasting because you don't have time to eat while you are attending to the person you are ministering to. That's how the prophets and teachers were ministering to the Lord – with fasting!

5. To minister to someone is to talk to the person gently and patiently.

6. To minister to someone is to nurse and gently care for the person.

There is a way to minister to God Himself, and that is through prayer. You can pray in such a way that God will know that you did not come with a list of items that you need. O, what a great opportunity you have to minister to the Lord!

Many people fall in love with their nurses and their servants. Many "queenly" wives are surprised when their husbands fall in love with their maidservants. Many years ago, a man called Uncle James told me that "Service is beautiful." He said to me that anyone who serves you will be beautiful to you because service is beautiful and attractive. It is not so attractive to be a "queen". You must learn this principle - being a servant and ministering to your master makes you beautiful.

Prayer is your great opportunity to minister to God.

Prayer is an opportunity to relax with God and to love Him.

Prayer is an opportunity to sit quietly by God's side and minister to Him.

Prayer is your opportunity to be like a nurse and a lover to God Himself.

God will love you as you come to Him and minister to Him.

Impress God by hiding your shopping list.

Talk to God without coming up with so many things that you need Him to do for you.

No one likes feeling that he is being used.

God is not happy when He is only remembered when people are needy and hungry. God also wants to be loved and ministered to!

Chapter 9
Prayer is an Opportunity to Become Anointed

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and PRAYING, the heaven was opened, AND THE HOLY GHOST DESCENDED IN A BODILY SHAPE LIKE A DOVE UPON HIM, AND A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

Luke 3:21-23

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am very sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to become anointed again and again.

Every time you pray, you become anointed. When Jesus prayed, the heavens opened, and He became anointed. This is what happens every time you pray. Being anointed did not only happen when Jesus prayed in the River Jordan. Being anointed happens every time you pray!

You will notice that anointed people are prayerful people. Dry and empty ministers are often not prayerful. The dryness is from the lack of prayer. The lack of prayer results in the lack of the anointing! There is no way around this reality. If you want to be anointed, you have to be prayerful!

And WHEN THEY HAD PRAYED, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31

When the disciples prayed, the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke the word of God with boldness. Being filled with the Holy Ghost is the same as becoming anointed. Prayer always leads to your becoming anointed!

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from

heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:1-2

On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were all together in the Upper Room. They had been there for a long time. What do you think they were doing in the Upper Room? They were waiting on God, ministering to God, praying and waiting for the promise. Suddenly, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking with other tongues.

Those in the Upper Room received the Holy Spirit and became the anointed Church of God which took the gospel to the ends of the world. The leadership was anointed and they became evangelistic and fruitful in a short time. The anointed church won thousands of souls in a few days.

The anointing flows down when prayer goes up to heaven.

Anointed people are prayerful people!

Chapter 10
Prayer is an Opportunity to Give Birth to Something

But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Galatians 4:18-19

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am very sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to give birth to something! Prayer is a type of travail. It is a type of labour. When women go to give birth, they enter into what is called a labour ward. It is a place where they labour and travail.

Prayer is an opportunity to labour and travail. Prayer is an opportunity to give birth to something.

Perhaps, you have not given birth to anything in the ministry. You can give birth to a church through prayer. Many people who claim to be pastors only know how to slander and speak evil of dignitaries. They seek to draw men after themselves instead of travailing and giving birth to something in ministry.

Whenever a carnal man is seeking to start a church, he simply slanders other pastors and spreads blasphemies, rumours and stories about them to draw a small crowd to himself. This is the standard protocol of a rebellious, Lucifer-inspired pastor or bishop who is seeking to start a church. “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS, TO DRAW AWAY DISCIPLES AFTER THEM” (Acts 20:29-30).

However, that is not the only way to gather a crowd. Prayer is an opportunity to gather a crowd by giving birth to them in the realm of the spirit.

Prayer is a birth-giving opportunity! It is possible to give birth to things in the realm of the spirit. It is possible to give birth to churches in the realm of the spirit! It is possible to give birth to ministries in the realm of the spirit! It is possible to give birth to converts in the realm of the spirit! It is

possible to give birth to souls in the realm of the spirit!

Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? FOR AS SOON AS ZION TRAVAILED, SHE BROUGHT FORTH HER CHILDREN. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

Isaiah 66:8-9

The prophet Isaiah reveals in this passage that a nation or church cannot be formed unless there is some travailing and labouring in the realm of the spirit.

Chapter 11
Prayer is an Opportunity to Dedicate Yourself to God

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. AND HE WENT A LITTLE FURTHER, AND FELL ON HIS FACE, AND PRAYED, SAYING, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

Matthew 26:36-40

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to dedicate yourself to God.

When Jesus prayed in the Garden, He dedicated Himself to God. He submitted Himself to the will of God. He humbled Himself before God.

Jesus agreed with God in the prayer time. He listened to God during the prayer time. He surrendered Himself to God in the prayer time.

Prayer is an opportunity to accept the will of God. Prayer is a guidance-confirmation opportunity for your life. What a chance to submit yourself to the will of God!

You must dedicate yourself to God and surrender yourself to His will. As you get deep into prayer, you will find yourself surrendering to the will of God. The will of God is mysterious! There are many aspects of the will of God that you may not like or want, but through prayer, you will find yourself saying, “Yes”, to God.

Every time you come to pray, you must seize the opportunity to consecrate yourself to the will of God and to the plan of God. You must tell God that you love Him and that you want to do His will.

You can also tell God what you really want and what you really desire. When you do so, you can also tell Him that you are ready to do His will. God will be so impressed with you for the delicate words of consecration

and dedication that you say to Him.

Chapter 12
Prayer is an Opportunity to Strengthen Yourself

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Matthew 26:41

Are you looking for an opportunity to do something spiritual? Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual! Prayer is an opportunity to strengthen yourself. Prayer is a spiritual strengthening opportunity for you. Every time you pray, your spirit is strengthened!

You are made up of a spirit, a soul and a body. Your spirit needs to be strong! Your soul needs to be strong! And your body also needs to be strong!

Today, we see men who have developed their muscles by exercising a lot and eating up to twelve eggs a day. Indeed, it is impressive to see their well-developed biceps, triceps, and deltoid muscles. It is impressive to see their well-developed *pectoralis major* and *pectoralis minor* muscles. We are impressed to see the hardened and well-developed *latissimus dorsi* muscles at their backs. It is a wonder to see their flat stomachs, their ripples and six-packs formed by their rectus abdominis muscles.

These muscular men are strong physically but are they strong in the spirit? Their muscles may be built up but their flesh is still weak if it cannot be controlled and made to walk on the narrow road of righteousness. Flesh that cannot be controlled and managed is weak.

Often, people who emphasise strength in the flesh are weak in the spirit. Many muscular men are willing and interested in the Lord but have no inner strength that matches their extreme muscle build-up. Their flesh may have well-developed pectoralis major and latissimus dorsi muscles, but it is still weak flesh because it is uncontrollable flesh.

There is a difference between being willing and being strong. Many people are willing and interested in doing the work of the Lord. They like God! They want to go on missions! They want to serve the Lord! They are willing to sacrifice for the Lord. But willingness is a very different thing from having the strength to do the will of God.

I look over my congregation and I see many willing people who love the Lord dearly. Their eyes are full of desire and interest in God and His wonderful service. How they want to be servants of the Lord!

How do you translate this desire and willingness into real ministry? The answer is prayer! Through prayer, you can and will become a great servant of the Lord. Your weak flesh will be controlled by your strong spirit through prayer.

Chapter 13
Prayer is an Opportunity to Work for God

But we will continue to devote ourselves steadfastly to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Acts 6:4 (AMPC)

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to work for God!

1. Prayer is half the work of a pastor.

But we will continue to devote ourselves steadfastly to PRAYER and the ministry of the WORD.

Acts 6:4 (AMPC)

Pastors should understand that ministry is basically prayer and the ministry of the Word. The very first pastors who existed defined this for us in the Book of Acts. Peter said he would not submit himself to secular work, but he would devote himself steadfastly to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Peter had learned from Jesus that ministry is prayer and the ministry of the Word. He had followed Jesus for three years and watched how Jesus prayed and ministered the Word. Jesus' pattern of prayer and the ministry of the Word had released the greatest power and established the church of God. Peter was determined to follow the same pattern to establish the church of God.

2. Not praying is the sin of negligence.

Moreover as for me, GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD SIN AGAINST THE LORD IN CEASING TO PRAY FOR YOU: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

1 Samuel 12:23

The prophet Samuel promised to pray and teach the people in the right way. He swore that he would not stop praying for them. He knew that not praying for the people was a sin. The sins of a pastor are sometimes

different from the sins of a normal Christian.

Pastors, make sure you pray for the people! As soon as you are appointed a pastor you must pray for the people or you will be declared a sinful pastor.

3. Prayer is the labour of a pastor.

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, ALWAYS LABOURING FERVENTLY FOR YOU IN PRAYERS, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Colossians 4:12

Prayer is the hard and laborious work of a pastor. Do you want to walk in the will of God? Do you want to be in the ministry and do the work of God? Then you must learn to labour in prayer! You must learn to sweat, suffer and persist in the monotonous drudgery of the hard labour of prayer.

Epaphras is an example of a prayerful person who laboured for the Colossians in prayer.

4. The labourers are few! What does this mean? It means the prayerful people are few.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; PRAY YE THEREFORE THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, THAT HE WILL SEND FORTH LABOURERS into his harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38

Prayer is the labour that we must undertake to reap the harvest of lost souls. The human race has fallen low into degradation, misery and wickedness. The appalling state of the human race is apparent to all. When we pray for labourers, we are praying for people who will join in the prayer work that is so necessary for ministry.

5. Prayer is the work of a priest.

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while

he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, ACCORDING TO THE CUSTOM OF THE PRIEST'S OFFICE, HIS LOT WAS TO BURN INCENSE when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Luke 1:5-10

Priests were servants of God whose duty it was to offer sacrifices and prayers to the Lord. As you can see, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was a priest. He had the duty of burning incense before the Lord's presence. His lot was to burn incense in the presence of the Lord. Your lot is to pray before the Lord and burn spiritual incense that will ascend to heaven.

When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and GOLDEN BOWLS FULL OF INCENSE, WHICH ARE THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS.

Revelation 5:8 (NASB95)

The golden bowls are full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Your prayers are called incense. You must offer much incense before the Lord.

Yet again, in the Book of Revelation, we see that prayers are the golden bowls full of incense. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him MUCH INCENSE, THAT HE SHOULD OFFER IT WITH THE PRAYERS OF ALL SAINTS upon the golden altar which was before the throne. AND THE SMOKE OF THE INCENSE, WHICH CAME WITH THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were VOICES, AND THUNDERINGS, AND LIGHTNINGS, AND AN EARTHQUAKE" (Revelation 8:3-5).

In the realm of the spirit, there are reactions to these bowls of incense that you release into the heavens. Through your prayers and supplications, there are voices, thunderings, lightnings and earthquakes that are unleashed into the world.

Chapter 14
Prayer is an Opportunity to become Strong

In the day WHEN I CRIED THOU answered me, and STRENGTHENEDST ME with STRENGTH IN MY SOUL.

Psalm 138:3

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am very sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to become strong!

1. **Strength is needed for ministry all the time.** Through prayer, you will develop the strength you need for ministry. Strength is needed to make it in ministry. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ strengthened Paul when He decided to put him into the ministry.

   I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, WHO HAS STRENGTHENED ME, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,

   1 Timothy 1:12 (NASB)

2. **Strength is needed to withstand the attacks of the enemy.** There are many attacks in the spirit that can be likened to the attack of a lion. Few people can survive the attack of a lion. Through prayer, you will receive strength so that you can survive all attacks from all lions.

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and STRENGTHENED ME; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I WAS DELIVERED OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LION.

2 Timothy 4:17

3. You will become stronger in your soul through prayer. Prayer gives you emotional strength. You need emotional strength when you are in the ministry. Your soul is your emotions, your will and your intellect. Many people are emotionally unstable. They know the right thing to do but their emotions take them in the wrong direction. Through prayer, your soul is strengthened.

   In the day WHEN I CRIED THOU answeredst me, and

STRENGTHENEDST ME with STRENGTH IN MY SOUL.

Psalm 138:3

4. **Pray for strength because Paul prayed for strength for the Colossian Christians.** All through the epistles, you find Paul praying and asking the Lord to strengthen people who have become new Christians. He prayed for strength for the Colossians. He also prayed for this strength for others.

   For this cause WE also, since the day we heard it, DO NOT CEASE TO PRAY FOR YOU, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; THAT YE might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; STRENGTHENED WITH ALL MIGHT, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

   Colossians 1:9-12

5. **Pray for strength because Paul prayed for strength for the Ephesian Christians.** All through the epistles, you find Paul praying and asking the Lord to strengthen people who have become new Christians. He prayed for strength for the Ephesians. He prayed for strength for others also.

   For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, THAT HE WOULD GRANT YOU, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT BY HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

   Ephesians 3:14-19

6. **Strength from prayer can come to you through the presence of angels.** Many times, angels appear and manifest themselves when there is prayer.

   And HE was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and KNEELED DOWN, AND PRAYED, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but

thine, be done. AND THERE APPEARED AN ANGEL UNTO HIM FROM HEAVEN, STRENGTHENING HIM.

Luke 22:41-43

7. **Praying in tongues builds you up and therefore makes you stronger.** Every time you pray in tongues, you become strong.

HE THAT SPEAKETH IN AN UNKNOWN TONGUE EDIFIETH HIMSELF; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

1 Corinthians 14:4

8. **Fear makes you weak. The spirit of fear is the spirit of weakness.** Pray for the Spirit of power, love and a sound mind to replace every spirit of fear in you. Power, love and a sound mind combine to make you far stronger than you were when you were weakened by the spirit of fear.

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:6-7

Chapter 15
Prayer is an Opportunity to Intercede

And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

Ezekiel 22:30

I am sure you are looking for an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to intercede for others!

1. **An intercessor is a man in the gap.** An intercessor is someone who stands between you and the evil that is determined against you. An intercessor is like a hedge that separates you from something else on the other side.

   And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

   Ezekiel 22:30

2. **Intercession is reserved for the greatest of all ministers.** Intercession makes you great! Jesus is the greatest example of an intercessor. All the men listed in this chapter of this book as intercessors are the greatest examples of God's servants that we know - Abraham, Elijah, Daniel and Esther. Intercession bestows greatness on you.

   THEREFORE WILL I DIVIDE HIM A PORTION WITH THE GREAT, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; BECAUSE he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, AND MADE INTERCESSION FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS.

   Isaiah 53:12

3. **Intercession is a pleading prayer.**

   Put me in remembrance: LET US PLEAD TOGETHER: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

   Isaiah 43:26

Intercession is when a junior person knows how to talk to a senior or an important person in such a way as to change his mind. Some young people can speak to an authority figure in such a way as to turn away

his anger and make him change his mind. This is the art of intercession.

The art of intercession is the art of pleading and negotiating with a person of authority who is bent on implementing judgment and justice.

Receive the grace to plead, negotiate, beg, talk, discuss, to beseech an authority figure who is justified in implementing the sentence of judgment. Intercession is pleading with God!

4. **Intercessors are God's greatest servants.** God reveals His secrets to His servants. An intercessor is someone who knows the secrets of God.

> Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.
>
> Amos 3:7

Intercessors are special to God; that is why God listens to them. Someone who is going to plead on your behalf or speak to an important person on your behalf must be special to that important person. Intercessors are very special people who have inner knowledge of the inner workings of the palace. Often, if it were not for the prayers of an intercessor, there would be complete devastation.

5. **Abraham was an intercessor.**

> And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.
>
> Genesis 18:17-19

Abraham was called a friend of God. Abraham was God's servant and prophet, so God revealed the destruction of Sodom to him. God was willing to listen to Abraham's words and intercessions for Sodom and Gomorrah. When you are an important man of God, your prayers make a difference. If you refuse to pray and just sleep your life away, you may be allowing many evils to happen without knowing.

Abraham was a classic intercessor! Abraham's appeals and intercessions to God on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah were heeded by God. The Lord even agreed on a deal to spare the city if He could find ten righteous men. What an intercessor!

You must start praying and interceding for your converts, the people you claim to be caring for spiritually. Many evils are happening to them because you spend your life constantly watching TV. Instead of praying, you are on social media, forwarding videos to all the groups you belong to. It is time to set aside useless socialising and become an intercessor.

> And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
>
> And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.
>
> And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.
>
> And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.
>
> Genesis 18:20-33

6. **Moses was a classic intercessor! Moses' words of intercession were heeded because he was God's special servant.** It was only through Moses' intervention and reasoning with God that the Israelites were not annihilated. Thank God for the work of intercessors!

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

AND MOSES BESOUGHT THE LORD HIS GOD, AND SAID, LORD, WHY DOTH THY WRATH WAX HOT AGAINST THY PEOPLE, WHICH THOU HAST BROUGHT FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT WITH GREAT POWER, AND WITH A MIGHTY HAND? WHEREFORE SHOULD THE EGYPTIANS SPEAK, AND SAY, FOR MISCHIEF DID HE BRING THEM OUT, TO SLAY THEM IN THE MOUNTAINS, AND TO CONSUME THEM FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH? TURN FROM THY FIERCE WRATH, AND REPENT OF THIS EVIL AGAINST THY PEOPLE. REMEMBER ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND ISRAEL, THY SERVANTS, TO WHOM THOU SWAREST BY THINE OWN SELF, AND SAIDST UNTO THEM, I WILL MULTIPLY YOUR SEED AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN, AND ALL THIS LAND THAT I HAVE SPOKEN OF WILL I GIVE UNTO YOUR SEED, AND THEY SHALL INHERIT IT FOR EVER. AND THE LORD REPENTED OF THE EVIL WHICH HE THOUGHT TO DO UNTO HIS PEOPLE.

Exodus 32:7-14

7. **Elijah was a classic intercessor!** Elijah knew how to get God to change the weather. Through Elijah's powerful intercession, rain fell or did not fall in the land of Israel.

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

James 5:17-18

8. **Esther was an intercessor for her nation.**

Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. FOR IF THOU ALTOGETHER HOLDEST THY PEACE AT THIS TIME,

THEN SHALL THERE ENLARGEMENT AND DELIVERANCE ARISE TO THE JEWS FROM ANOTHER PLACE; BUT THOU AND THY FATHER'S HOUSE SHALL BE DESTROYED: AND WHO KNOWETH WHETHER THOU ART COME TO THE KINGDOM FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

Esther 4:13-17

Esther stood in the gap for her nation. She stood between the king's judgment and the people of Israel. If it were not for Esther, Israel would have been wiped out. Esther risked her life to save Israel. She stood up and pleaded with the powerful king, explaining to him that she was one of the Jews who would be executed if Haman's plan went ahead. She did not hold her peace.

Today, many pastors are holding their peace while entire groups of people are being destroyed. Today, there are entire nations that are under satanic sway. It is not even possible to preach the gospel in many countries today. The preaching of the gospel is disallowed in many places.

The rulers of these nations have forbidden that Christ should be preached. Why is that? I believe there was a time when pastors held their peace and did not intercede as they should have. The enemy came in and took over entire nations, and today they are completely locked in under the power of satan.

9. **Daniel was an intercessor for his nation.** An intercessor will sometimes fast and pray for issues that do not concern him at all.

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. AND I SET MY FACE UNTO THE LORD GOD, TO SEEK BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATIONS, WITH FASTING, AND SACKCLOTH, AND ASHES: AND I PRAYED UNTO THE LORD MY GOD, AND MADE MY CONFESSION, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to

them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

Daniel 9:1-4

10. **The nations will yield to the ministry of intercessors.** Today, it is time to rise up and intercede for the nations again.

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. ASK OF ME, AND I SHALL GIVE THEE THE HEATHEN FOR THINE INHERITANCE, AND THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH FOR THY POSSESSION. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Psalm 2:1-12

Chapter 16
Prayer is an Opportunity to Make Requests

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Philippians 4:6

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to make requests to God! Every time you pray, you have an opportunity to make a request to God.

1. Prayer is an opportunity to request wisdom!

> IF ANY OF YOU LACK WISDOM, LET HIM ASK OF GOD, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.
>
> James 1:5-6

2. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for labourers.

> Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; PRAY YE THEREFORE THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, THAT HE WILL SEND FORTH LABOURERS into his harvest.
>
> Matthew 9:37-38

Jesus taught us to pray for labourers. Jesus' solution to the vastness of the harvest was to pray for labourers. Pray for labourers as Jesus taught us. Many times, we pray for souls to be won and for souls to be saved. But you must learn to pray for labourers and campaign for more labourers to be sent into the vast fields of harvest.

3. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for the Holy Spirit.

> If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: HOW MUCH MORE SHALL YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER GIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?

Luke 11:13

4. Prayer is an opportunity to request good things.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, HOW MUCH MORE SHALL YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN GIVE GOOD THINGS TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?

Matthew 7:11

5. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for deliverance from unreasonable and wicked men.

Finally, brethren, PRAY FOR US, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And THAT WE MAY BE DELIVERED FROM UNREASONABLE AND WICKED MEN: for all men have not faith.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Luke 11:4

6. Prayer is an opportunity to request judgment on evildoers. The psalmist requested judgment on the enemies of God.

Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble. Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it. Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless. Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.

Psalms 10:12-15

7. Prayer is an opportunity to request the Lord's curses to come on mockers, scoffers and slanderers.

Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginations against me. Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, and all their imaginations against me; The lips of those that rose up against me, and their device against me all the day. Behold their sitting down, and their rising up; I am their musick. Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands. GIVE THEM SORROW OF HEART, THY CURSE UNTO THEM.

Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of the LORD.

Lamentations 3:60-66

8. Prayer is an opportunity to request God's vengeance on men.

But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, LET ME SEE THY VENGEANCE ON THEM: for unto thee have I opened my cause.

Jeremiah 20:12

Yet, O Lord of hosts, You who test the righteous, Who see the mind and the heart; LET ME SEE YOUR VENGEANCE ON THEM; For to You I have set forth my cause.

Jeremiah 20:12 (NASB1995)

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I WILL AVENGE HER, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. AND SHALL NOT GOD AVENGE HIS OWN ELECT, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:1-8

9. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for church growth.

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I WILL YET FOR THIS BE ENQUIRED OF BY THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, TO DO IT FOR THEM; I WILL INCREASE THEM WITH MEN LIKE A FLOCK. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 36:37-38

10. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for the nations.

ASK IT OF ME, AND I WILL CERTAINLY GIVE THE NATIONS as Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth as Your possession.

Psalm 2:8 (NASB20)

11. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for unity.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John 17:20-21

12. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for revelation and wisdom.

Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; THAT THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF GLORY, MAY GIVE UNTO YOU THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 1:16-18

13. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request for open doors.

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; WITHAL PRAYING ALSO FOR US, THAT GOD WOULD OPEN UNTO US A DOOR OF UTTERANCE, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

Colossians 4:2-3

14. Prayer is an opportunity to request love.

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Ephesians 3:16-17

15. Prayer is an opportunity to make a request on behalf of your enemies.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and PRAY FOR THEM WHICH DESPITEFULLY USE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU;

Matthew 5:44

Chapter 17
Prayer is an Opportunity to Follow Jesus

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6:9-13

Do you want an opportunity to do something spiritual? I am sure you do! Prayer is an opportunity to do something spiritual. Prayer is an opportunity to follow Jesus!

1. **Prayer is indeed an opportunity to follow Jesus.** Jesus lived a life of private prayer. Do you want to follow Jesus? Let's follow Jesus in prayer. Let us follow Jesus' rules of prayer.

Jesus taught us that private prayers will give us the greatest outward results.

Do you want great public recognition and acknowledgement for your life and ministry? Then invest in private, hidden and unseen prayers. Don't be worried if no one knows what you are doing.

Do not bother to announce that you are doing a certain number of days of prayer and fasting.

Let people even think that you went on a holiday. What matters most is what God sees! The public, outward reward that God is going to give you will follow.

> And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, WHEN THOU PRAYEST, ENTER INTO THY CLOSET, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and THY FATHER WHICH SEETH IN SECRET SHALL REWARD THEE OPENLY... Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of,

before ye ask him.

Matthew 6:5-6, 8

2. **Prayer is indeed an opportunity to follow Jesus. Follow Jesus and avoid useless repetitions in prayer.** Jesus taught that praying and repeating yourself to make a great show is useless. God is simply not impressed with outward shows of piety and religiosity.

> But when ye pray, USE NOT VAIN REPETITIONS, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

Matthew 6:7-8

3. **Prayer is an opportunity to follow Jesus. Follow Jesus and repeat yourself when it is genuine and heartfelt because Jesus repeated Himself when He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.** Interestingly, Jesus spoke of useless and vain repetition in prayer. However, Jesus used repetitions that were useful and helpful when He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.

> Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and PRAYED, SAYING, O MY FATHER, IF IT BE POSSIBLE, LET THIS CUP PASS FROM ME: NEVERTHELESS NOT AS I WILL, BUT AS THOU WILT. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. HE WENT AWAY AGAIN THE SECOND TIME, AND PRAYED, SAYING, O MY FATHER, IF THIS CUP MAY NOT PASS AWAY FROM ME, EXCEPT I DRINK IT, THY WILL BE DONE. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And HE LEFT THEM, AND WENT AWAY AGAIN, AND PRAYED THE THIRD TIME, SAYING THE SAME WORDS. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Matthew 26:38-45

4. **Prayer is an opportunity to follow Jesus. Follow the Lord's Prayer as a pattern for long hours of prayer.** Through the Lord's prayer, we have many topics that can keep us in prayer for hours. We also have important topics that we can pray about. We also know the things that are not out of order or inappropriate to ask for.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6:9-13

5. **Jesus showed us that prayer is an opportunity to forgive others and to also ask for forgiveness.**

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:14-15

Jesus taught us the need to forgive whilst we pray. Prayer for forgiveness is essential because we are so sinful that we even smell of sin. Sin has a smell! The smell of sin is called the savour of death.

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: TO THE ONE WE ARE THE SAVOUR OF DEATH UNTO DEATH; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

2 Corinthians 2:15-16

6. **Follow Jesus by fasting and praying. Jesus expects us to fast.** He said, "*When* you fast" not "*If* you fast". No matter what anybody says, fasting will always be a part of our religious and spiritual lives.

Fasting is necessary for prayer. Fighting carnality and removing distractions is necessary for spirituality. Fasting helps you to fight carnality and remove distractions.

Moreover WHEN YE FAST, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:16-18

7. **Prayer is another opportunity to follow Jesus Christ. Enter the narrow gate of prayer.** Enter the narrow gate of prayer where few enter. Few ministers enter the narrow gate of prayer.

Most ministers do not pray. Jonah did not pray until he got into the belly of the whale. There are many prophets like that – they will not pray until they get into trouble. Decide to enter the narrow gate and be one of the ministers of God who prays a lot.

> Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.
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> Matthew 7:13-14

8. **Prayer is an opportunity to follow Jesus and build your house on the rock. Jesus taught every minister to build on a rock.** Prayer will give you a great foundation for your ministry. Prayer will make you as solid as a rock and capable of surviving storms. Others have fallen away because they did not build on the real foundation of prayer and spirituality. Build a solid foundation of prayer. Whenever the storm comes, you will find yourself still standing after the storm.

> Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:
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> Matthew 7:24-28

9. **We know people by their fruits. Prayer is one of the fruits that will come out of your life to make you known.** Your prayers will make you noticeable in the house of the Lord. Prayerless pastors are in the barren category and prayerful pastors stand out by their fruits.

> YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.
>
> Matthew 7:16-20

10. **Follow Jesus' style of prayer and great multitudes will follow you when you come down from the mountain of prayer.**

Great multitudes followed Jesus when He came down from the mountain. What do you think Jesus was doing on the mountain? Jesus went into the mountains to pray and be alone with God. On this occasion, some people followed Him to hear His teaching. But when He came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. Indeed, *great multitudes* will follow a man of prayer.

> When he was come down from the mountain, GREAT MULTITUDES FOLLOWED HIM.
>
> Matthew 8:1

11. **Prayer is an opportunity to follow Jesus into the mountain of prayer. When Jesus came down from the mountain, He exhibited a powerful deliverance ministry.** Demons which did not respond to His disciples responded to Him and were expelled from a child. Follow the laws of prayer in Jesus' ministry, and you will experience powerful deliverance in your ministry.

> And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.…
>
> And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.
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> Luke 9:28, 37-40

"And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh."
Ecclesiastes 12:12